

PARTNERSHIP LEVERAGES COMPANY'S OWN RESOURCES

ABOUT WYANDOT INC. Wyandot makes tortilla chips, cheese puffs, popcorn and other salty snacks under private-labels, as well as for the retail food and food service sectors. Located in Marion, Ohio, it is one of the leading snack-food contract manufacturers in the United States, with an annual production capacity of one hundred million pounds. Its products are available worldwide. Wyandot was family-owned and managed until 1994, when the first non-family member to run the company was named president and CEO. Today the company has around 350 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Since 1999, Wyandot has been a member of the Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT). CIFT is part of the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which is part of the MEP National Network. The company has partnered with CIFT on a number of projects that have greatly benefited both Wyandot and its local economy.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. CIFT's "Advanced Technology Evaluation Program" helped Wyandot to leverage their own resources in pursuit of technologies that can improve the financial performance of their operations. In one project, Wyandot took advantage of CIFT's technology program to explore the use of rapid detection technology to uncover pathogens in a dry processing environment. The program stimulates investment in technology by enabling Wyandot and other participating companies to evaluate potential improvements that can reduce costs or increase revenues.

By utilizing its network of technical resources, CIFT can also connect companies like Wyandot to world-class technical resources within Ohio. The relatively modest investment in the evaluation of new technologies has allowed Wyandot to stay at the forefront of its industry. Overall, the projects and events that Wyandot has partnered with CIFT on have helped the company improve productivity, reduce costs, remain competitive in its industry, and evaluate new technology-based initiatives, all of which help the company improve the financial performance of its operations.

"We are very pleased with the support that CIFT has offered Wyandot. The CIFT member focus groups led to the launch of a \$1,000,000 brand in the first six months of production. CIFT is always willing to help and consult based on their vast knowledge of food science and the snack business."

-Lisa Davis, Vice President, Technical Services

RESULTS



Increased investment in plant/equipment and IT by **\$850,000**



New products or processes increased by **\$250,000**



Workforce practices increased by **\$100,000**

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**Manufacturing
Extension Partnership**